

the burnett buzz...

Winter 2013

FREE Property Management Planning for Burnett graziers

Have you been wondering how to better manage your pastures and soil health, address land management issues such as weeds, pests or erosion or change the layout of your property infrastructure to make cattle management easier and more efficient? If so, then BCCA's free Property Management Planning service is for you.

Property Management Planning involves reviewing your property and business resources, identifying things you would like to change or do differently and planning the actions required to make this happen.

It is a great opportunity for everyone involved in your business to be part of the decision-making and planning process to improve the profitability and sustainability of your business.

As part of the service we will also assist you to understand potential management options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester more carbon, and the associated production benefits.

"... it is a great opportunity for everyone involved in your business to be part of the decision-making and planning process"

As part of the Property Management Planning service, BCCA provides property maps and other resources and, at the end of the process, we collate the information into one document for you. We tour your property with you to discuss your property resources and management issues and help you to identify, and where possible source, additional



technical information or expertise you may require.

Another reason you may be interested in Property Management Planning with BCCA is that access to incentive funding under several other government programs targeting natural resource management may require the applicant to have a property management plan in place.

The project is still in its initial stages but we will be ready to start Property Management Planning with graziers in the Burnett Mary before the end of the year.

If you would like more information or you wish to register your interest in undertaking Property Management Planning please contact Veronica Chapman.

BCCA is able to offer this free service to graziers in the Burnett Mary through a joint project with the Burnett Mary Regional Group (BMRG) and Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers (BFVG), supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's Carbon Farming Futures Extension and Outreach program.

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You'll receive great satellite imagery of your property as part of the PMP process.

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Highlights

- Property Management Planning for the Burnett
- Qld State Landcare Conference
- Welcome Marisa Young
- Flood Recovery Riparian Fencing
- BCCA staffer meets Allan Savory

Queensland 2013 State Landcare Conference

Condamine Headwaters Landcare Group has been announced as the 2013 Queensland Landcare Conference host, bringing together hundreds of land managers, extension staff and researchers finding solutions for balancing healthy habitats and profitable production.



This year, one of our own staff at BCCA will be presenting a short talk about one of our programs run in the Burnett: Healthy Habitats. It was too hard to go past the opportunity to speak about our project which has the same name as the theme for the Conference, but is also an important opportunity to share with others in the Landcare community about

a few good projects that have been undertaken in our part of the world.

The conference theme this year is 'Healthy Habitats – Profitable Production' and will feature speakers such as Mr Shayne Joyce (2012 Winner National Carbon Cocky of the Year) from Theodore, and Mrs Georgie Somerset (a rural leader with experience in agribusiness, rural tourism and regional development) from Durong, as well as authors Julian Cribb ('The Coming Famine') and Bill Gammage ('The Biggest Estate on Earth') and Major General Michael Jeffrey AC, AO(Mil), CVO, MC (Retd).

But it won't all be sitting and listening, some of the field trips include holistic grazing management at Cunningham, rainforest regeneration near Killarney, local indigenous cultural heritage sites and a lesson on soil chromatography.

"...one of our own staff at BCCA will be presenting a short talk about one of our programs run in the Burnett: Healthy Habitats"

The Queensland 2013 Landcare Conference is happening 27-29 September in Warwick, Qld. Registrations are open until the weekend of the event, but it's cheaper to get in before 1 September. Further information is available at <http://tinyurl.com/landcare2013> or by contacting Condamine Headwaters Landcare on 07 4661 9909 or catherine@ddrlandcare.org.



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Staff Profile – Marisa Young

Hi, I am Marisa Young and will be starting with BCCA soon. I am excited to be joining such a diverse and dedicated team. My position will have me involved in Flood Recovery projects such as Floodplain Management and Land Productivity and in part the Reef Rescue Grazing project.

I come with a background in environmental planning and natural resource management. My formal qualifications are a Bachelor of Science-Australian



Environmental Studies. I have worked in environmental planning for many years across the Wide Bay Burnett Region with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines; therefore, I have a good understanding of the region, its diversity and challenges it faces to achieve sustainability.

"I come with a background in environmental planning and natural resource management"

I not only have formal natural resource management qualifications and extensive experience in the industry, I follow this through in my personal life by implementing natural resource planning

initiatives on our family grazing property.

I have also worked for the previously named Environmental Protection Agency in Toowoomba—working across the large diverse region of south west Queensland undertaking licensing, compliance and regional planning activities. In addition, I have also worked in the private sector as an environmental scientist with planning consultants to ensure appropriate on ground management of small to large development activities across Queensland.

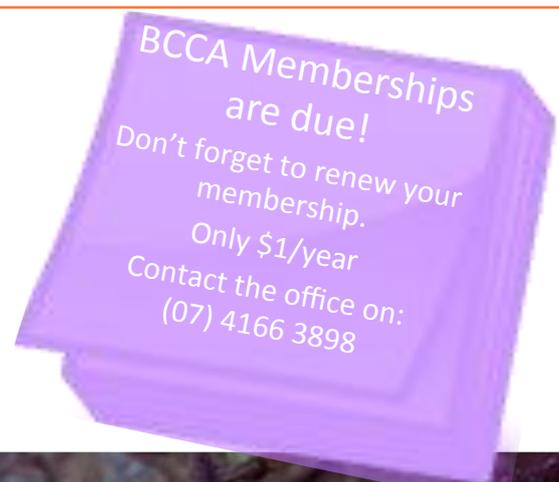
I am looking forward to working with all the BCCA team, landholders and many other stakeholders as I start this exciting new role.



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What's on 'round the Burnett & Beyond...

- 10 Sep Agforce Predator control workshop, Gin Gin
- 11 Sep Agforce Predator control workshop, Gayndah
- 11 Sep BCCA General and AGM, Mundubbera
- 27-29 Sep QLD State Landcare Conference, Warwick
- 30 Oct Agforce CSG Support Workshop, Theodore
- 31 Oct Agforce Digital Mapping, Biloela



Flood Recovery Riparian Fencing

When we get knocked down, we dust ourselves off and get back up again, right? Fences and floods don't mix, and this year many were knocked down or completely washed away during the widespread flooding in January and February this year.

From across the Burnett, 28 landholders took advantage of our Flood Recovery Riparian Fencing project in which fencing materials were offered to assist with replacing damaged fences that keep cattle out of the creeks. The properties were spread right across the Burnett region and included stretches of up to 8km along various water ways including the

following creeks; Three Moon, Reids, Baffle, Boonara, O'Bil Bil, Barambah also Rawbelle Gully, Boyne, Stuart, Kolan and the Burnett River.

"...28 landholders took advantage of our Flood Recovery Riparian Fencing"

In total, the fencing materials (7000 steel pickets and 390 rolls of plain and barbed wire) covered over 60km of creek banks and will protect over 500ha of riparian vegetation along our flooded creeks and

river systems. On some places, the materials came just in time and were put to use by the visiting BlazeAid volunteers.

Additional funding for the purchase of these materials was thanks to the Burnett Mary Regional Group. Thanks to all who participated and best wishes for your continuing recovery.



Holistic Management Planning – Mimicking nature

I recently attended 'A morning with Allan Savory' to learn about the value of using holistic management planning to improve farm productivity and reduce the degradation of grazing land. Mr Savory developed the concept of Holistic Management Planning while working on the complexity of planning grazing to reduce the spread of desertification in the wildlife reserves of his native Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) back in 1955.

Mr Savory presented a powerful message about the importance of reclaiming our degraded grasslands in order to ensure economic, environmental and social stability in the seasonal rainfall ecosystems of the world using the method of holistic management and planned grazing techniques to 'mimic nature'.

In his presentation, he described situations where stocking densities were increased by 400% by planning and managing grazing pressures according to plant 'recovery' periods (resting times).

"We know that desertification (degradation) is caused by livestock overgrazing the plants, leaving the soil bare. Everybody knows this, and was taught (this) as I was," Mr Savory said. This thinking led him as a young biologist to recommend and witness the culling of

thousands of elephants to reduce overgrazing in the newly created national parks of Africa. "And it got worse, not better," he said.

He explains, "What we had failed to understand, was that in the seasonal humidity environments of the world, the soil and the vegetation developed with very large numbers of grazing animals. Large herds dung and urinate all over their own food, and they have to keep moving. It was that movement that prevented the overgrazing of plants, while the periodic trampling ensured good cover of the soil." He argues that this high density mob stocking and constant moving technique is the key element to utilise standing pasture in good seasons and turn degraded and rundown pastures into productive farms which store water and carbon in the soil.

To encourage new growth "we have traditionally used fire," says Mr Savory. He warns us that, "fire also leaves the soil bare releasing carbon and also burning one hectare of soil gives off more pollutants than 6000 cars". However graziers are fully aware that to leave standing grass to 'oxidise' naturally inhibits new pasture growth in the summer reducing productivity and increasing fire risk in other areas.

According to Mr Savory, "there is only one option left (to stop desertification in seasonal grasslands) and that is to use livestock (high density) bunched and moving (constantly) as a proxy to mimic nature, so the grassland can produce new growth successfully again". He goes on to explain 'the grass is now covering the soil as mulch - dung, urine and litter and that soil is ready to absorb and the hold the rain and store carbon'.

Holistic Management Planning was a concept initially developed and later fined tuned by Mr Savory and his colleagues to offer farmers a decision-making tool to help ensure economic, environmental and social viability for the short and long term. Holistic Management Planning has been successfully used in wildlife reserves and grazing enterprises throughout South Africa, South America, Central America, USA and Australia, to reclaim degraded paddocks and improve pasture productivity. He reports that his farm has now increased the original stocking rate by over 800% using his holistic management techniques.

"He argues that this high density mob stocking and constant moving technique is the key element to utilise standing pasture ..."

Although Mr Savory speaks with a quiet but determined authority his theories on grazing management continues to cause controversy amongst the scientific and farming communities. Scientists state that his evidence is based on anecdotal 'practice' rather than the rigorous experimentally based research demanded by scientists and government alike. It is also unconventional and confronting to traditional graziers. However he presents a compelling and powerful argument for the reclamation of degraded grasslands and land profitability.

Fiona Morris



Mr Allan Savory & BCCA's Fiona Morris



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Burnett Catchment Care Association



BCCA is a community based organisation working on the philosophy of integrated catchment management. Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) is a philosophy that encourages a coordinated approach to the management of natural resources in Queensland. Its overall purpose is to integrate the management of land, water and related biological resources in order to achieve their sustainable and balanced use.

ICM involves the voluntary actions of stakeholders including government, rural landholders, industry, fisheries and urban dwellers that incorporate the goals of achieving and maintaining a healthy catchment for future generations.

BCCA is a member based organisation. If you'd like to become a member please phone or email the office for a membership form!

BCCA derive the majority of our funding and acknowledge support from the Burnett Mary Regional Group and the Australian Governments Caring for our Country program.

We're on the web!
www.betterburnett.com

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CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY



Last word...

New programs and new staff mean it is exciting times ahead for BCCA. Two and four year contracts are a welcome change from one year contracts of the past.

BCCA will be heavily involved in the role out of the 2-year On Farm Productivity and Riparian Recovery program; a \$20M program from the Queensland and Australian Governments to assist in the recovery from ex-Tropical cyclone Oswald, of which BMRG received \$8M. The program focusses on five key project areas including riparian recovery, debris removal, weed control and management, restoring land productivity and floodplain restoration.

BCCA will mainly be focussed on delivery of these projects in the North Burnett area however will be working closely with BMRG in the other areas of the Burnett.

We welcome Marisa Young to the BCCA

team to assist with the delivery of this program, particularly the floodplain management and restoration. Marisa has extensive experience with planning and will be based in Mundubbera.

“BCCA will be heavily involved in the role out of the 2-year On Farm Productivity and Riparian Recovery program; a \$20M program from the Queensland and Australian Governments...”

Another new program is the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's Carbon Farming Futures Extension and Outreach program; a 4-year program. Veronica Chapman will

be delivering this program throughout the entire catchment and I encourage anyone who is keen to develop a property management plan to contact us to take advantage of this free service.

Property management plans may be essential for a number of future funding grants, so by participating in this program, you will be on the front foot if any funding becomes available in the future.

We have a number of other funding submissions in the pipeline, including a water quality monitoring project. The federal election has put a hold on the announcement of some funding programs and we hope for some positive announcements once the election is over.

Katie Muller

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